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SERVANT LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES IN COLLEGIAL LEVEL: EFL STUDENTS' REPORTED EXPERIENCES IN AFGHANISTAN

Servant leadership has been one of the most preferred styles of leadership in education due to its underlying principles. This exploratory study aimed to examine the university teachers' use of servant leadership principles by students' reported experiences. It utilized a mixed-method approach. A questionnaire was sent to 111 college students after conducting a pilot, passing the reliability test, and applying sample size formula. The semi-structured interviews were also taken from 11 participants who were sophomore and junior students in the English Department, Faculty of Letters and Humanities. The data was analyzed through color-coding, thematic and statistical analyses. This study narrowed its scope by only focusing on the principles of listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others, and community building. It tested the correlation between these principles and examined the relationships between the reported use, gender, and schooling years. The results revealed that the practiced servant leadership principles were pretty at a high level except for the commitment to others' growth principles (M= 3.6). It also found that gender was not a robust predisposing factor, whereas years of schooling influenced the students' reported experiences about their teachers' use of servant leadership in the classroom. The principles also proved to be correlated after conducting the Pearson correlation test. The study concluded with suggestions and further implications that could improve the quality of instruction in the classrooms and educational institutions. It is highly suggested to establish leadership centers in both public and private higher education institutions to provide various leadership trainings for students, teachers and staff to enhance the quality of education.

Keywords: *community building; empowering; listening; persuading; servant leadership.*

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Introduction. Servant leadership is positioned as one of the most prevalent types of leadership, which is practiced in today's world. This concept is first introduced by Greenleaf in his essay *The Servant as Leader*. Servant leaders are intrinsically encouraged by providing service and addressing other people's needs first (Greenleaf, 1970). Thus, servant leadership highlights «the caring principles with leaders as servant who focus on followers' needs to help them become more autonomous, knowledgeable, and like servant themselves» (Northouse, 2018, p. 35). It has received much attention in education due to the volatility of situations and existing exigency to care about students' needs and quality teaching (Noland & Richards, 2015). Teachers are considered as servant leaders (Bowman, 2005; Noland & Richard, 2015), hence, servant leadership can be examined in the context of teaching (Doraiswamy, 2013; Jeyaraja & Franco, 2019).

Teaching traditional classrooms for many years has resulted in exercising authority and transferring information by mode of lecturing in many educational contexts (Shor, 1993). State regulations and a demanding economy triggered a change in traditional classrooms and called for a dynamic learning environment (Powers et al., 2008). According to Burkhardt (2002), higher education institutions are required to incorporate a leadership that addresses the needs of teachers, students, and society at large. Hays (2008) argued that once institutions integrated servant leadership principles into teaching, it wielded enormous positive influence on students and the learning process. Many educational leaders were, thereby, aware of servant leadership, and they adopted it as a preferred style (Zhang et al., 2012). Simultaneously, a low degree of readiness to embrace

servant leadership philosophy was also present among some administrative leaders in educational institutes that called for further awareness (Bareas & Abbas, 2017).

Even though some instructors exhibit servant leadership principles when practicing, it is not known to what extent in different contexts. Likewise, the English Department at Herat University is untapped in terms of exploring servant leadership and its principles.

This study aims to explore the following research question: how do Afghan EFL male and female students describe their teachers' use of servant leadership principles (i.e., listening, persuasion, commitment to followers' growth, and community building) at Herat University?

The following null hypotheses guide this study: NH1: Students' reported experiences of their teachers' use of servant leadership principles do not differ by gender. NH2: Students' reported experiences of their teachers' use of servant leadership principles do not differ by years of schooling. NH3: The leadership principles of listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others, and community building are not correlated.

Noland and Richards (2015) claimed, «servant teaching is about the teacher's out of class behaviors (community engagement), teacher selflessness (helping students learn and grow, putting students first), and organizational skills (conceptual skills)» (p. 27). Besides, Hays (2008) asserted that learners with servant teachers around are more self-assured, empowered, and devoted to their learning. Similarly, McCann and Spark (2018) found that a positive correlation existed with the quality of instruction and university professors incorporating servant leadership principles. Thus, this research contributes to current teaching practices and theoretical discussion around servant leadership, servant teaching, and its principles in higher education. The study of principles exhibited by the Afghan English language teachers will also have a significant impact on improving instruction at university settings and responding to the call for change. The results of this study help teachers to identify their strengths and find the spots which require further improvement for advancing servant leadership practice in their classrooms.

Literature Review.

Servant Leadership and Servant Teaching. Servant leadership has caused great interest among researchers and practitioners within the past couple of decades (Qiu et al., 2020). It reiterates the intrinsic human desire to care for others and promote people's growth for the common good (Bowman, 2005). Similarly, it puts high values on people, positions their interests first over the leader's, releases the authority to followers, and builds a sense of belonging within the community for the development of each member (Greenleaf, 1970). Connecting servant leadership to religion, Jubran (2015) argued that servant leadership puts a huge responsibility on the part of leaders, resulting in protecting the members for meeting their goals. Universal values, thereby, exist that predominated many religions; they are aligned with servant leadership behavioral patterns. These shared characteristics include respect, honesty, compassion, service-oriented, and law-abiding attitudes (Zentner, 2015).

Servant leadership is «an other-oriented approach to leadership [which is] manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, and outward reorienting of their concern for self towards concern for others within the organization and the larger community» (Eva et al., 2019, p. 114). Servant leadership incorporates three attributes: motive, mode, and mindset. The *motive* «is the underlying personal motivation for taking up a leadership responsibility [to serve others]» (Eva et al., 2019, p. 114). The motivational component of servant leadership represents a central premise that separates servant leadership from other forms of leadership (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). This premise exhibits a conceptual model for the servant leader: I serve, so I am. Eva et al. (2019) claimed that the *mode* communicates the idea that every follower feels specific needs, owns particular goals, and has special interests. The *mindset* is a deliberate approach to uphold a commitment toward followers' growth; it empowers them to become more productive, resulting in bringing positive changes in the community. Thus, servant leadership is a shift from an authoritative to an empowerment approach (Dambe & Moorad, 2008). Servant leadership is a more preferred style than an authoritative one; it exhibits many supportive personal characteristics (Zhang et al., 2012).

Examining the effects of personal peculiarities on the quality of servant leadership, different studies reveal that the more leaders are extrovert, open to ideas, self-evaluator, cognizant, and humble, the higher servant leadership principles will be asserted (Flynn et al., 2016; Verdorfer, 2016). Peterson (2003) stated that leaders' personal characteristics of love, humility, altruism, vision and trust are linearly correlated that result in others' growth and end with serving followers. Chin and Smith (2006) highlighted the effects of humility and stated the existence of a servant leader depends on humility.

Crippen (2004) described servant-leadership as a useful model for educational leadership. Most individuals who joined education disciplinary fields recognize that teaching is a service profession (Anderson, 2013). Many studies have also recognized the teacher as a servant leader (McCann & Sparks, 2018). Similarly, the teachers' most important intrinsic motivation comes from their desire to serve others and the tremendous influence they extend on the lives of others (Doraiswamy, 2013). Bowman (2005) stated that teachers as servant leaders devote themselves to inspire their colleagues and students. The incorporation of servant leadership principles results in an understanding of and expressing genuine empathy towards students, and it promots a positive and open learning environment (Olsen, 2018). At the same time, «the servant teacher must be academically tough, yet caring and approachable; thus, strategies for balancing

high standards with compassion are laid out» (Olsen, 2018, p. 53).

Servant leadership principles will be translated into classroom instructions if the teacher perceives and acts as a servant. This process involves natural feeling, conscious choice, care, serving, autonomy, and empowerment (Greenleaf, 1970). Developing the skills and advancing the knowledge of learners to succeed, the teacher similarly influences students' attitudes and their professional behaviors, serving as role models. The teachers as servant leaders begin by listening to every students' dreams and hopes and then they serve to make a difference in the lives of others (Bowman, 2005). The teacher «unleashes the strengths, talents, and passions of those he or she serves» (Jennings and Stahl-Wert, 2003, p. 14). A servant teacher looks at teaching as «relational», «empowering» and «liberating» task and not as an authoritarian, unilateral, top-down approach (Hays, 2008). The teacher can incorporate this mentality into the classroom by empowering through motivation, explaining his/her reasoning for teaching the topic, displaying enthusiasm and positive attitude, being caring and approachable, putting the needs of students first, feeding the intellectual appetite, inviting disagreement and debate, having students prepared for class activities, and considering feedback as two-way street. Overall, the instructor manifests servant leadership's key characteristics in teaching (Olsen, 2018).

Spears (1998) designated several key attributes for servant leadership that could be used in teaching. These qualities include listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, a sense of community, and commitment to the growth of others. *Listening*: paying rapt attention to what learners and others say and reflect accordingly. *Empathy*: trying to identify students' feelings. *Healing*: striving to bring reconciliation for resolving conflicts. *Awareness*: having self-awareness. *Persuasion:* using persuasion rather than exercising authority. *Conceptualization*: fostering learners' ability to visualize success. *Foresight*: anticipating upcoming circumstances. *Stewardship*: holding schools and institutions accountable for the common good. *Community Building*: creating a sense of community within the students and beyond. Finally, *Commitment to Growth of others:* developing students' knowledge and skills to become servant leaders.

Theoretical Framework. The scope of this study is limited to exploring exclusively the four designated qualities suggested by Spears (1998): *listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others,* and *community building*. It helped to focus on the four constructs in designing the survey questionnaire, incorporating constituents in each principle.

Listening. Servant leaders demonstrate a high level of commitment to listening to others, maintaining a state of receptivity, and connecting to their own inner voice (Spears, 2002). On that account, «the first impulse for a servant leader is to listen first and talk less» (Lubin, 2001, p. 32), and «only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first» (Greenleaf, 1970, p. 18). Learners' problems are not interruptions in servant teaching but opportunities for restoring positive feelings (Crippen, 2010). Meanwhile, the leaders are required to devote themselves to reflect upon what they have heard so that they gain a meaningful sense of issues and situations (Spears, 2002). «Listening, thereby, is a critical [reflective] way leaders demonstrate respect and appreciation of others» (Russell & Stone, 2002, p. 151).

Besides, servant leaders are required to respond to some questions to examine whether they are committed to listening. For instance, am I really listening to the person I would like to communicate with? Is my attitude welcoming to understand the person despite holding opposite views? (Greenleaf, 1970). Such reflection is indispensable to the leader's growth (Lubin, 2001). Once the servant leaders are willing to listen inclusively to their followers' ideas, this behavioral pattern promotes followers' commitment to objectives and assigned tasks (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Thus, servant leaders are required to listen first; seek a high degree of understanding, and

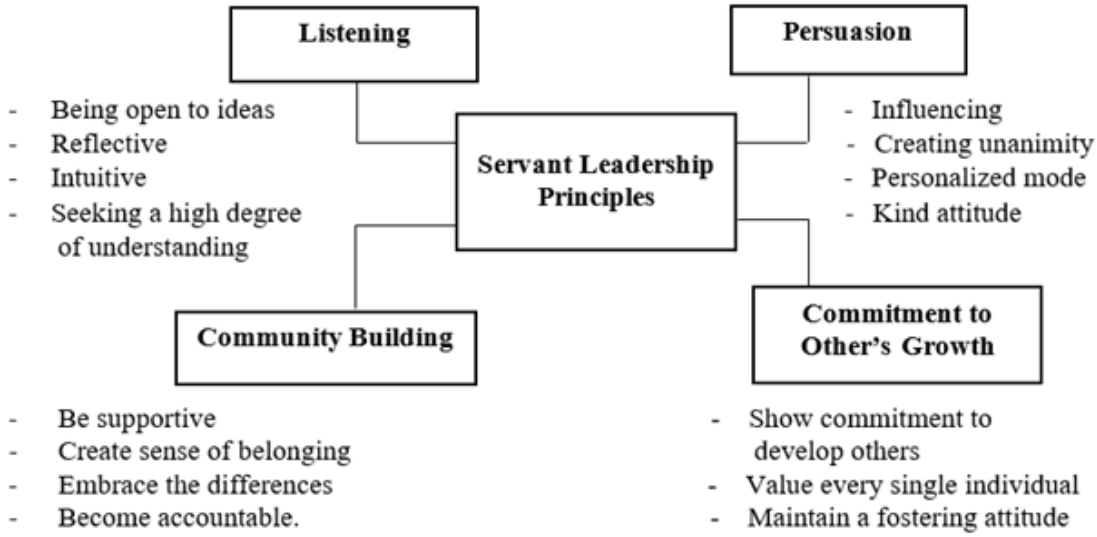

Figure 1. **Servant leadership principles with their key descriptors**

maintain the state of being open to ideas, reflective, and intuitive (Greenleaf, 1970; Laub, 1999; Spears, 2002).

Persuasion. Leaders use persuasion to inspire others to act without exercising power and exerting authority (Rachmawati & Lantu, 2014). Spear (1995) described persuasion as a plausible line of reasoning that influences and creates unanimity among the followers' way better than authority. Hay (2008) examined the students' perception of persuasion, a principle of servant leadership. One of the student's narratives revealed that the instructor initiated a personalized method to convince learners by relating the concepts to his own life, contextualizing the concepts, having students reflect, and making informed decisions if they were placed in various situations. Falbe and Yukl (1992) claimed that a leader's power of persuasion loaded with a kind attitude resulted in favourable ends compared to coercive techniques. These research findings accentuate that servant leaders are required to exercise the power of influencing, adopt a personalized persuasive mode to create unanimity, and maintain a kind attitude in the process.

Commitment to Others' Growth. One of the most significant changes that servant leadership brings forth is followers' growth in a positive way (Greenleaf, 1996) and inspiring followers to step out of their intellectual comfort zone (Olsen, 2018). The leaders acquire this principle by maintaining a growth-mindset. They begin with a belief in human potential and development, both their own and other people's (Dweck, 2017). Dweck also presented the hallmarks of suchleaders as they are not constantly trying to prove they are better than others. For example, they don't highlight the pecking order with themselves at the top, they don't claim credit for other people's contributions, and they don't undermine others to feel powerful. Instead, they are constantly trying to improve.... And because of this, they can move forward with confidence that's grounded in the facts, not built on fantasies about their talent (p. 107).

Patterson (2003) argued that a servant leader «empowers followers to find their own path, and they, in turn, are inspired to help others find their best paths» (p. 24). Servant leadership, therefore, provides enough space for people to develop and release the responsibility to help them acquire a high degree of expertise and knowledge (Trompehaare & Voerman, 2010). It requires leaders to limit their egos through sharing authority and establishing dynamic relationships in the empowerment process (Cochrum, 2012). Empowerment marks a significant standing in servant leadership behaviours. No servant leadership exists without power-sharing (Greasley & Bocârnea, 2014). «The servant-leader [thereby] is committed to the growth of each and every [privileged and least privileged] individual [personally, professionally, and spiritually] within his or her institution» (Spears, 2002, p. 8). Servant leaders perceive people's development as a duty that needs to be fulfilled regardless of the convoluted process (Laub, 1999). Through this intricate experience, leaders strive to help others grow as more healthy, intelligent, and independent (Freese, 2004). «Growth is operationalized as an ability to identify others' needs and provide developmental opportunities» (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006, p. 308). Thus, «people will be trained in one way or another to be the leaders of the future and the cycle will continue» (Jubran, 2015, p. 32).

Servant leaders identify others' achievements and encourage creative ideas. Using a distinctive approach toward motivation, leaders work beyond their duties and try to gain others' satisfaction (Lowe et al., 1996). Motivation and affect are crucial for development and intellectual performance (Piaget, 1981). Teachers, thereby, have to identify the affect aspect of learning. Motivation is not just a simple mental drive but a directed act toward achieving particular goals. This goal-oriented behaviour frames students' mindset; it determines whether students are inclined to put emphasis on self or look at the challenge as an opportunity to learn new things. This behaviour considerably influences students' emotional reactions to intellectual challenges, and the degree of persistence and efforts along the learning process (Dweck 1999). «Motivation, emotion, and cognition, [therefore], work together to produce intellectual performance» (Dweck et al., 2004, p. 326). Likewise, Siegel (2012) argues that «emotional communication and affective attunement become the medium in which the child's cognitive capacities develop» (p. 249).

Servant leaders look at others' mistakes as opportunities to take in new insights to grow and create a positive environment to flourish. They attempt to change the status quo by valuing people and helping others develop new knowledge and skills. They also serve as role models and act guides on people's sides (Laub, 1999). Thereby, servant leaders are required to demonstrate high commitment to others' growth, value every single individual and maintain a fostering attitude throughout the process.

Community Building. A community of learners is evident in «a generosity of spirit coupled with a proclaimed sense of perceived interdependence» (as cited in Bowman, 2005, p. 257). Leaders and followers need to spend time together, listen to one another, share ideas, and reflect (Laub, 1999). The research «findings reveal the necessity of becoming competent in the characteristics of a servant leader, such as being a good listener, displaying empathy, and building a sense of belonging» (Olsen, 2018, p. 55). Compelling community is essential to open up opportunities for followers to affirm and reaffirm their commitment to leaders and the common good (Goffee & Jones, 2001). According to Spears (2002), servant leaders persistently work to build that community to maintain cohesion inside an organization. Peck (1998) claimed that an institution possesses high capacities to turn into communities when all are committed to one another, share their concerns, and support one another. Laub (1999) asserted that

servant leaders demonstrate genuine willingness to create a community in which all members are linked with caring and loving bond to fulfil a shared vision.

The absence of community, respect, and trust causes problems for learners and the teachers (Greenleaf, 1970). Laub (1999) postulated that the followers are highly influenced by the quality of the bond within the community. Leaders appreciate the differences and pay respect to all, identify existing biases and avoid predispositions. These research findings highlight the importance of building community to have a tremendous impact in the servant leadership process and pinpoint that leaders are required to be supportive, create a sense of belonging, embrace the differences, and become accountable. Chan (2016) concluded that servant leadership in a learning community makes a supportive and healthy environment possible and it ultimately cultivates the students with grit and a growth mindset.

The students' mindset as an underlying belief system plays an important role in demonstrating a varied degree of persistence during intellectual challenges and the level of achievement they represent. In this respect, entity and incremental learners exist in a classroom. Entity learners are performance-oriented and they look at intelligence as a fixed entity. Since they expect to perform well, they give up in solving the problem if the challenge is difficult, whereas incremental learners perceive intelligence as something that can be learned; they exercise problem-solving strategies better when the intellectual challenge arises; they feel less concerned about their poor performance because their ultimate goal is to learn and improve their skills. Classroom culture and teaching methods significantly affect the degree to which learners embrace either of the mindsets (Perkins & Ritchhart, 2004).

Research Methods. This mixed-method study investigated Afghan EFL students' perceptions of their teachers' use of servant leadership principles of *listening, persuasion, commitment to growth of others,* and *community building* in their courses. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches provided us with a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, which is multifaceted and context-specific (Patton, 200). Data collected from survey questionnaires and interviews were carefully triangulated to gain more comprehensive and informed results (Greene, 2007).

Research Population and Sampling Method. The target population of this study was 154 college students in the English Department, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Herat University, Afghanistan. The prospective participants were contacted on social media (i.e., Facebook and Telegram) to see if they are willing to participate in our study. A total of 111 students form sophomores and juniors completed the online survey questionnaire. The qualitative data was collected from 11 students—six juniors, five sophomores. All the participants were studying undergraduate courses and were in second and third years of college. To conduct the quantitative part, random sampling was employed after applying probability and validity rules. Using a purposeful sampling technique, the researchers chose 11 participants from the total population for collecting the qualitative data.

Instruments. This study utilized a survey questionnaire that included four constructs, namely *listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others,* and *community building*. Each construct includes the traits and descriptors suggested by different researchers. The survey is also designed on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 as strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. *Listening* construct included 6 statements indicating being open to ideas, reflective, institutive, and seeking a high degree of understanding. *Persuasion* was comprised of 5 accounts that measured the descriptors, such as influencing, creating unanimity, personalized mode, and kind attitude. *Commitment to others' growth* is comprised of 5 statements that demonstrated a commitment to developing others, value every single individual and maintain a fostering attitude. Finally, *building community* concept included 5 accounts that embedded the descriptors of being supportive, creating a sense of belonging, embracing the differences, and becoming accountable.

Giving the questionnaire to 30 respondents with 21 as the number of statements, its validity was tested using Pearson correlations. Based on the significance value, the validity test showed that all 21 items were valid as they gained sig. (2 tailed) 0.000< 0.05 or % 5.

For reliability analysis, four constructs of listening, persuasion, commitment to others' growth, and building community were individually examined. First, the six variables in the listening scale were analysed to compute Cronbach's alpha. The alpha value was above 0.600 (α= 0.605). Then, the five variables in the *persuasion* construct were assessed; it gained an alpha value of 0.640 (α= 0.640). The other variables in the other two scales of *commitment to others' growth and building community* were examined. The alpha values were 0.694 and 0.696 consecutively (α= 0.694; α= 0.696). This analysis demonstrated the items form the scales have satisfactory internal consistency reliability. Finally, all the 21 variables that formed the servant leadership scale passed through the same testing. The Cronbach's alpha value was 0.863 (α= 0.863), which indicated good internal consistency. The variables with lower item-total correlations that did not fit into the scales included: 4 and 21. The items were examined for wording problems and conceptual fit.

Data Analysis. The quantitative data collected by the survey questionnaire was inserted in SPSS version 25 to analyse and measure each construct and total composite value of four designated principles of *listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others,* and *community building*. The descriptive statistics, including the mean number and standard deviation were, presented. Moreover, the null hypotheses were tested by conducting one-way ANOVA and T-test. The

quantitative data collected by interview was analysed by Dedoose online software. First, the researchers transcribed the interview verbatim and then inserted the documents to do color-coding, generating themes and finding their frequency.

Findings. The study aimed to measure *listening, persuasion, commitment to growth of others, and community building* principles incorporated by the teachers in the classrooms based on the students' reported experiences.

Quantitative Findings. The current study provided descriptive statistics for four principles. The *listening* principle gained pretty high mean score (M= 3.8) with the highest values for «respect ideas» and «open to different ideas» variables (M= 4.32; M= 4.30). «Listen first» and «insightfully incorporate needs» items, however, got the lowest value in the scale (M= 3.46; M= 3.54). Likewise, the *persuasion* principle also gained pretty high value (M= 3.8) with the highest scores for «using modes of persuasion» and «using kind attitude» variables (M= 4.05; M= 3.97) and the lowest values for a personalized way to persuade and creating unanimity items (M= 3.51; M= 3.65). The *commitment to others' growth* gained low mean number (M= 3.6) with the highest scores for «persistently attempt to develop skills» and «value each student's effort» variables (M= 4.24; M= 3.86) and the lowest values for « help least privileged students» and «nurturing attitude» items (M= 3.32; M= 3.46). The *community building* principle gained pretty high-value score (M= 3.8) with the highest values for «Care About Students' Learning Progress»; «Teachers as Loving Members» and «Build Trust Within Classroom» variables (Mean= 4.03; M= 3.97; M= 3.97). However, «create a sense of belonging» and «take on the responsibly» gained the same low score (M= 3.73). The composite mean value for *listening, persuasion, commitment to others' growth, and community building* principles was pretty high (M= 3.8), yet *commitment to others' growth* gained the average value (M= 3.6).

Table 1

Composite Mean Value of the Four Principles

	N	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Listening	111	2.50	4.83	432.00	3.8919	.62063	.385
Persuasion	111	2.60	5.00	424.80	3.8270	.61643	.380
Commitment to Others' growth	111	1.60	4.60	409.80	3.6919	.68902	.475
Building community	111	1.20	5.00	431.40	3.8865	.77676	.603
Composite Value	111	2.28	4.77	424.50	3.8243	.56780	.322
Valid N (listwise)	111						

Hypotheses Testing Results. This study also aimed to test the three null hypotheses to identify the relationship between gender, years of schooling, and students' reported experience on servant leadership principles. The hypotheses included:

NH1: Students' reported experiences on servant leadership principles do not differ by gender. NH2: Students' reported experience on servant leadership principles do not differ by years of schooling. NH3: The leadership principles of *listening, persuasion, commitment to the growth of others,* and *community building* are not correlated.

To test whether there is a connection between gender and students' reported experience on servant leadership principles, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The significance score was above 0.05 (p= 0.508) in the composite mean value of the four principles indicating there was no connection between gender and servant leadership principles reported by students in general. However, a significant difference existed in *commitment to others' growth* principle since it gained a p-value less than of 0.05 (p= 0.00). In other words, male respondents reported a much higher value on this principle compared to their female counterparts (3.8 > 3.5). The test of homogeneity of variances and robust test of equality of means reiterated the same results. The first null hypothesis, thereby, appeared to be true despite of *commitment to others' growth* principle's significant variation.

To test the second hypothesis and examine whether students' reported experiences toward servant leadership principles do not differ by years of schooling, a T-test was conducted between two groups, sophomores (N= 36) and juniors (N= 75). Based on t-test group statistics, sophomore students reported a high score in *listening, persuasion, commitment to others' growth building community, and composite mean value* variables, ranging from 4.2 to 3.9. The significance value was below 0.05 (p= 0.008) in composite mean value, indicating that a connection existed between years of schooling and servant leadership principles reported by both the sophomore and junior students. All principles exhibited high significance values except *building community* (p= 0.129). The second null hypothesis, therefore, appeared to be false in general despite *building community* principle's insignificant fluctuation.

To examine the third hypothesis and test whether leadership principles of *listening, persuasion, commitment to growth of others,* and *community building* are not correlated. The bivariate Pearson Correlation was conducted to measure the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the above constructs. It revealed that all principles had a statically significant linear relationship ($p<0.01$). The magnitude of the associations was robust ($0.5 < |r|$) and the principles are positively correlated.

Table 2

One-way ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Listening	Between Groups	.028	1	.028	.072	.789
	Within Groups	42.341	109	.388		
	Total	42.369	110			
Persuasion	Between Groups	1.096	1	1.096	2.936	.089
	Within Groups	40.703	109	.373		
	Total	41.799	110			
Commitment to Others' Growth	Between Groups	2.312	1	2.312	5.049	.027
	Within Groups	49.911	109	.458		
	Total	52.223	110			
Building Community	Between Groups	.760	1	.760	1.262	.264
	Within Groups	65.610	109	.602		
	Total	66.370	110			
Composite Value	Between Groups	.143	1	.143	.441	.508
	Within Groups	35.321	109	.324		
	Total	35.463	110			

Table 3

Pearson Correlations Test Result

		Listening	Persuasion	Commitment to others' growth	Building community
Listening	Pearson Correlation	1	.675**	.636**	.636**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	111	111	111	111
Persuasion	Pearson Correlation	.675**	1	.428**	.592**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	111	111	111	111
Commitment to Others' Growth	Pearson Correlation	.636**	.428**	1	.664**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	111	111	111	111
Building Community	Pearson Correlation	.636**	.592**	.664**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	111	111	111	111
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

Qualitative Findings. The following paragraphs discuss the qualitative results of the study. The results for each servant leadership principle are presented separately.

Listening. All the participants celebrated the fact that their teachers are open to new ideas and initiatives. They claimed that many of their teachers encourage students to think deeply about the contents of the lessons. For example, one student pointed out that in their literature courses, students share different perspectives toward the literary works they study. He added, the teacher listens attentively to the opinions of students and appreciates students' way of looking at issues.

However, the participants had different opinions about their teachers' listening style: some listen and act, some listen but do nothing, some listen and cannot do

anything. One participant, for example, claimed that some of their teachers are good listeners because they even allocate time beyond the class in the department to listen to the students and help them. However, a few participants claimed that their teachers listen to their students' needs; however, the policies and the system sometimes prevent them from addressing the students' needs. For instance, one student stated that he had to miss one of his exams because his mother was sick. Although the teacher knew that the student had a valid and convincing excuse, he could not provide a chance for the student—the student had to retake the exam as if he failed the first chance. The third category is those teachers, according to one participant, who collect feedback from students, but they do not bring changes. For instance, one participant noted that every time we are asked to fill in evaluation forms about the teacher, many suggest that he/she uses a different teaching method. However, nothing changes – it is as if the teacher is resistant to change. Moreover, we found that students' voices regarding the curriculum in the course syllabi are not heard. One participant stated that some teachers rarely ask about our perceptions toward the textbook, and if they do, they do not revisit their decision.

On the other hand, some participants claimed that students' voices concerning their teacher's performance are collected without being kept in the feedback loop. She specifically stated:

Every semester, the department head visits our class and distributes evaluation forms concerning the teachers' performance. However, we are not informed about the extent the collected information is used to improve the quality of instruction. It would be a great thing if they reflect our voices into practice.

One of the participants noted that we need to realize that what happened to the feedback we shared – what functioned well and what did not function well.

Persuasion. The participants all agreed that teachers try to persuade students to study hard and improve. However, the methods of persuasion, according to the participants, are different. For example, one participant stated that the teachers' friendly manner encourages students to participate in discussions, share, learn, and grow. Besides, another student said that some of her professors work very hard on their professional development. She noted, «I follow one of my professors on Facebook. He participates in different national and international programs; he even takes many online courses. Seeing my professor's achievements on Facebook encourages me to work harder – he is my role model».

On the other hand, a few of the participants claimed that their teachers use various modes of persuasion to influence students. One student stated, «some of our teachers threaten us by talking about exams and failures, while some are gentle». Similarly, another student claimed that although many of their teachers have a kind attitude towards students, some of them are very strict with their classroom policies and classroom rituals (e.g., attendance, deadline, plagiarism). On the contrary, one student asserted that a few of their teachers share examples of successful students they had in order to convince us to work harder». Likewise, one student stated,

One day, one of the teachers told us that about 90 percent of the English language graduates find their favourite jobs. He shared his success story and provided a few examples. His words are still in my mind, and they inspire me to work hard so that I achieve my dream job – becoming a university professor.

Similarly, another student said that his teachers' use of the phrase «I believe in you» helped him to work harder and not give up, resulting in improving dramatically.

Moreover, many of the participants argued that the teachers' use of personalization activities in the classroom increased students' participation and enhanced their learning. For instance, one of the students argued that some of their teachers connect the lessons to students' lives by asking them to share personal examples when justifying their arguments. Another participant noted that his teachers' use of personalization activities in the class allowed him to learn more about the personal literacies of his classmates.

Empowerment. The participants shared conflicting viewpoints concerning their teachers' commitment to student growth. The majority of the participants claimed that their teachers show a sense of care toward their students through class preparation. For example, one student stated: «Our teachers do their best. They tolerate many obstacles to deliver effective teaching. For instance, playing videos is not part of the curriculum, but our teachers always play videos so that they facilitate the learning process for us. This performance of our teachers is one example of their care about our learning».

Although teachers are not required to prepare materials beyond the curriculum, we found that there are teachers who use their personal laptops and prepare markers and handouts from their budget. Moreover, one student addressed one of her teachers and claimed that he is someone who wants his students to achieve their goals. She argued that some of her teachers help students to learn how to find meaning in their lives; therefore, this means that some teachers value every single student.

On the other hand, some students claimed that a few of their teachers only think about taking the attendance sheet, teaching the class and giving exams – like a systemic manner. One student argued that her teachers are not accountable for students' learning. According to this student, if teachers are accountable for their students' learning, they will strive for developing students' growth. Similarly, another student argued, «some teachers give us lengthy books that are almost impossible to be covered in one semester; they force the students to study the book throughout the semester». In addition, one student argued: «For some other teachers, the individual progress of students is not important. They teach whatever is in the textbook, and they believe

strong students will pass the course and weak students will retake the course, while the problem might depend on the teaching method since not all students might understand the lessons».

Furthermore, we found that students consider their teachers' use of formative assessment as a sign of care for students' learning. One participant claimed, «our teachers rarely give us regular feedback, which means they do not care if we improve or not». Another participant argued that only a few of their teachers give regular quizzes or assign students to write response papers. She noted that if teachers want to see students' growth, they need to evaluate students' performance regularly during the semester.

The participants also noted that only a couple of their teachers think about students' progress beyond university. For example, one participant argued that their teachers rarely connect students to society. He noted that our teachers rarely discuss the skills and qualifications we need beyond school in the job market. On the other hand, two of the participants acknowledged that their academic advisor shares materials and resources for students' academic and professional development skills. She stated that they are connected with a Telegram group with their academic advisor. According to this student, when they have concerns or questions related to their lessons or even fellowship or scholarship, they share their concerns on their Telegram group.

Community Building. Almost all the participants claimed that their teachers embrace the differences among students. They also stated that teachers show a sense of support and belonging so that they encourage students to participate in class discussions, share thoughts and contact their teachers when they need help. For example, one student claimed that his teachers are very approachable. Another student stated that almost all his teachers use group work activities, different games, technology or group work assignments so that even students support each other. Similarly, one student pointed out: «Many of our teachers encourage students to participate in volunteer activities. For example, our writing teacher once provided an opportunity for us to provide sophomores consultations with their writing projects. The experience caused us to identify our talents and take part in future collaborative tasks».

We found that the teachers' nurturing community-building skills among students resulted in becoming accountable for the growth of each other regardless of their gender, ethnicity and beliefs. Overall, the participants claimed that their teachers build a friendly space in the classroom, where students freely participate in the discussions, critique ideas, and learn from each other.

Discussion and Conclusions. This study revealed that students reported pretty high in all the servant leadership principles except the commitment to others' growth principle (N=3.6). The possible interpretations could be related to some academic environmental factors. The teachers' heavy workload and large classes might contribute to the fact that they could not continuously allocate a moderate level of effort and time to support every student. This coincides with Sarwari's (2018) argument that such factors negatively influence the teachers' use of commitment to others' growth in the classroom.

This study also demonstrated that gender was not a strong predisposing factor despite only a significant difference in commitment to others' growth principle reported higher by male respondents. This coincides with Chiniara and Bentein's (2016) findings that gender did not robustly correlate with servant leadership but only in need of autonomy variable ($r = .20$, $p < 0.01$). On the contrary, de Rubio and Kiser (2015) argued that female leaders tend to provide more service and display higher altruistic value compared to their male counterparts. The possible interpretations might be: (a) female students have probably higher expectations from their teachers to help them develop as they provide more self-less service or as they have been oppressed in a patriarchal societal system like Afghanistan (b) they feel more dependent on teachers due to their passive gender responsibility imposed by the society; therefore, they reported that the instructors did not incorporate the commitment to others' growth well into their practices.

The years of schooling and academic socialization, however, negatively influenced the students' reported experiences (sophomores reported higher than juniors). The possible interpretation could be that junior students' reported experiences were influenced by their frequent observation of their teachers' poor servant leadership practices. As a result, they reported lower compared to the sophomores. Unlike the negative association of years of schooling in this study, McCann and Sparks (2018) investigated servant leadership and its relationship with quality of instruction and they found that graduate students perceived that their professors displayed significantly higher values in servant leadership principles rather than undergraduate students, indicating a positive relationship.

The principles were also significantly and positively correlated. Servant teaching is not about focusing on one principle and ignoring others; they are intertwined. For instance, improving students' community building skill or helping them grow is impossible without listening to the students' voices. Moreover, servant leadership was a unidimensional construct (Hunter et al., 2013), and its principles are correlated as the composite variable was positively associated with helping behaviour (Neubert, Hunter & Tolentino, 2016).

Servant leadership was suggested to be an effective model for educational leadership (Crippen, 2004). Servant teaching was positively correlated with cognitive learning and students' engagement since it is about teachers' extracurricular activities, community engagement, and selfless behaviours of putting students first and support learners' intellectual growth. In

other words, servant teaching, directly and indirectly, influences students' learning (Noland & Richard, 2015). Therefore, teachers are required to improve their readiness to embrace servant leadership (Bareas & Abbas, 2017).

It is necessary for the teachers to incorporate servant leadership principles into their courses to enhance students' learning by considering the following suggestions. First, it will be an effective strategy if teachers listen to; understand students' backgrounds, needs and interests, and incorporate these students' voices and feedback seamlessly into designing course materials and teaching the concepts. Besides, the teaching behaviours and decisions are better to be modified based on students' feedback. Learners also need to be informed about these changes. Then, if the instructors employ persuasive language and rhetorical appeals when teaching, students will demonstrate a higher degree of willingness to learn the concepts better than coercive and directive approaches.

Despite teaching large heterogeneous classes (Miri, 2016; Miri & Joia, 2018) and heavy workload at universities in Afghanistan (see Golzar, 2019; Miri, 2016; Miri & Joia, 2018; Siddiq, Miri & Sarwarzada, 2019), it will be highly promising if teachers show a strong commitment toward learners' growth by ongoing timeless support of every single student, both privileged and less privileged, maintaining a nurturing attitude and valuing every individual effort. Finally, community building is a determining factor in ensuring students' success in the classroom. It is, thereby, an effective approach to create a sense of belonging, being persistently accountable for group activities, providing care for every member, building trust among students and promoting the idea that if community succeeds, each individual gets to the top.

This study provided an observational platform upon which experimental designs may be effectively constructed. It only measured the four servant leadership principles of *listening, persuasion, show commitment to others' growth, community building* using students' reported experiences. However, the researchers could include and examine other servant leadership principles of *empathy*, *healing*, *awareness*, *conceptualization*, *foresight*, and *stewardship* proposed by Spear (1998) to better understand actual servant leadership. Since this study examined the relationship between servant leadership, gender and years of schooling, researchers could explore environmental factors, gender responsibility and cultural identity. Moreover, possible strategies could also be proposed to incorporate the principles into classroom practices effectively. Correlations between servant leadership principles and other variables such as students' emotional investment, learning, performance, satisfaction, and teachers' quality of instruction and service need be examined and an effective servant leadership model should be generated. More importantly, we urge educational authorities and policymakers to establish leadership centers within higher education institutions in Afghanistan to provide various leadership trainings for students, teachers and staff to enhance the quality of education.

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ПРИНЦИПИ ЛІДЕРСТВА-СЛУЖІННЯ НА КОЛЕГІАЛЬНОМУ РІВНІ В УНІВЕРСИТЕТАХ АФГАНІСТАНУ (ЗА РЕЗУЛЬТАТАМИ СТУДЕНТСЬКОГО ОПИТУВАННЯ)

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Стаття присвячена дослідженню використання викладачами університету принципів лідерства-служіння на основі опитування студентів. Дослідження зосереджувалось на чотирьох вибраних принципах: слухання, переконання, відданості особистісному зростанню кожного та розбудові громади. Було перевірено співвідношення цих принципів та вивчено взаємозв'язок між результатами опитування про використання названих принципів, статтю респондентів та терміном навчання в університеті. У дослідженні взяли участь 111 студентів першого і другого курсів факультету літератури та гуманітарних наук Університету Герату (Афганістан). Анкета була відправлена студентам після проведення пілотного дослідження, перевірки тесту на надійність та застосування формули розміру вибірки. Студенти відповіли на запитання онлайн-анкети щодо використання викладачами 4 принципів лідерства-служіння. Якісні дані були зібрані методом інтерв'ю

в 11 студентів. Результати показали, що рівень використання принципів лідерства, що практикуються в освітньому процесі, був досить високим, за винятком відданості особистісному зростанню кожного (M = 3,6), що також було підтверджено студентами під час інтерв'ю. Дослідження також виявило, що стать студентів не є важливим фактором, що впливає на відповіді, в той час як термін навчання в університеті впливає на повідомлення студентів про використання викладачами принципів лідерства-служіння під час навчання: другокурсники відмітили вищий рівень їх використання порівняно з першокурсниками. Більше того, принципи виявилися співвіднесеними після проведення тесту на кореляцію Пірсона. У статті представлені висновки, зроблені в результаті дослідження, та пропозиції щодо подальшого удосконалення використання принципів лідерства-служіння в освітньому процесі, зокрема створення центрів лідерства в закладах вищої освіти і проведення тренінгів з лідерства-служіння для студентів і викладачів для підвищення якості вищої освіти.

Ключові слова: *відданість особистісному зростанню кожного; лідерство-служіння; переконання; розбудова громади; слухання.*

ПРИНЦИПЫ ЛИДЕРСТВА-СЛУЖЕНИЯ НА КОЛЛЕГИАЛЬНОМ УРОВНЕ В УНИВЕРСИТЕТАХ АФГАНИСТАНА (ПО РЕЗУЛЬТАТАМ ОПРОСА СТУДЕНТОВ)

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Статья посвящена исследованию использования преподавателями университета принципов лидерства-служения на основе опроса студентов. Исследование было сосредоточено на четырех выбранных принципах: умения слушать, убеждения, заинтересованности в личностном росте каждого и создании сообщества. Было проверено соотношение этих принципов и изучена взаимосвязь между результатами опроса об использовании названных принципов, полом респондентов и сроками обучения в университете. Результаты показали, что уровень использования принципов лидерства, практикуемых в образовательном процессе, достаточно высок, за исключением заинтересованности в личностном росте каждого (M = 3,6), что также было подтверждено студентами во время интервью. Исследование также выявило, что пол не является важным фактором, влияющим на ответы студентов, в то время как годы учебы в университете влияли на сообщения студентов об опыте использования преподавателями принципов лидерства-служения во время обучения. Более того, принципы оказались соотнесенными после проведения теста на корреляцию Пирсона. В статье представлены выводы, сделанные в результате исследования, и предложения по дальнейшему совершенствованию использования принципов лидерства-служения в образовательном процессе в учреждениях высшего образования.

Ключевые слова*: заинтересованность в личностном росте каждого; лидерство-служение; создание сообщества; умение слушать; убеждение.*

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